



Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  
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# John J. McLaughlin Cumberland Hill School and Annex

CUMBERLAND

## THE SALT VISIT TEAM REPORT

November 19, 2004



### **School Accountability for Learning and Teaching (SALT)**

**The school accountability program of the Rhode Island Department of Education**

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## **The Purpose and Limits of This Report**

This is the report of the SALT team that visited John J. McLaughlin Cumberland Hill School and Annex from November 15-19, 2004.

The SALT visit report makes every effort to provide your school with a valid, specific picture of how well your students are learning. The report also portrays how the teaching in your school affects learning, and how the school supports learning and teaching. The purpose of developing this information is to help you make changes in teaching and the school that will improve the learning of your students. The report is valid because the team's inquiry is governed by a protocol that is carefully designed to make it possible for visit team members to make careful judgments using accurate evidence. The careful exercise of professional judgment makes the findings useful for school improvement because these judgments identify where the visit team thinks the school is doing well, and where it is doing less well.

The major questions the team addressed were:

- How well do students learn at John J. McLaughlin Cumberland Hill School and Annex?
- How well does the teaching at John J. McLaughlin Cumberland Hill School and Annex affect learning?
- How well does John J. McLaughlin Cumberland Hill School and Annex support learning and teaching?

The following features of this visit are at the heart of the report:

Members of the visit team are primarily teachers and administrators from Rhode Island public schools. The majority of team members are teachers. The names and affiliations of the team members are listed at the end of the report.

The team sought to capture what makes this school work, or not work, as a public institution of learning. Each school is unique and the team has tried to capture what makes John J. McLaughlin Cumberland Hill School and Annex distinct.

The team did not compare this school to any other school.

When writing the report, the team deliberately chose words that it thought would best convey its message to the school, based on careful consideration of what it had learned about the school.

**The team reached consensus on each conclusion, each recommendation, and each commendation in this report.**

The team made its judgment explicit.

This report reflects only the week in the life of the school that was observed and considered by this team. The report is not based on what the school plans to do in the future or on what it has done in the past.

This school visit is supported by the Rhode Island Department of Education as a component of School Accountability for Learning and Teaching (SALT). To gain the full advantages of a peer visiting system, RIDE deliberately did not participate in the active editing of this SALT visit report. That was carried out by the team's Chair with the support of Catalpa Ltd.

The team closely followed a rigorous protocol of inquiry that is rooted in Practice-based Inquiry™ (Catalpa Ltd). The detailed *Handbook for Chairs of the SALT School Visit, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition* describes the theoretical constructs behind the SALT visit and stipulates the many details of the visit procedures. The *Handbook* and other relevant documents are available at [www.Catalpa.org](http://www.Catalpa.org). Contact Rick Richards at (401) 222-4600 x 2194 or [ride0782@ride.ri.net](mailto:ride0782@ride.ri.net) for further information about the SALT visit protocol.

SALT visits undergo rigorous quality control. Catalpa Ltd. monitors each visit and determines whether the report can be endorsed. Endorsement assures the reader that the team and the school followed the visit protocol. It also assures that the conclusions and the report meet specified standards.

## **Sources of Evidence**

The Sources of Evidence that this team used to support its conclusions are listed in the appendix.

The team spent a total of over 180 hours in direct classroom observation. Most of this time was spent in observing complete lessons or classes. Almost every classroom was visited at least once, and almost every teacher was observed more than once. Team member had conversations with various teachers and staff for a total of 39 hours.

The full visit team built the conclusions, commendations, and recommendations presented here through intense and thorough discussion. The team met for a total of 26 hours in team meetings spanning the five days of the visit. This time does not include the time the team spent in classrooms, with teachers, and in meetings with students, parents, and school and district administrators.

The team did agree by consensus that every conclusion in this report is:

- Important enough to include in the report
- Supported by the evidence the team gathered during the visit
- Set in the present, and
- Contains the judgment of the team

## **Using the Report**

This report is designed to have value to all audiences concerned with how John J. McLaughlin Cumberland Hill School and Annex can improve student learning. However, the most important audience is the school itself.

How your school improvement team reads and considers the report is the critical first step. RIDE will provide a SALT Fellow to lead a follow-up session with the school improvement team to help start the process. With support from the Cumberland School District School Improvement Coordinator and from SALT fellows, the school improvement team should carefully decide what changes it wants to make in learning, teaching, and the school, and amend its School Improvement Plan to reflect these decisions.

The Cumberland School District, RIDE and the public should consider what the report says or implies about how they can best support John J. McLaughlin Cumberland Hill School and Annex as it works to strengthen its performance.

Any reader of this report should consider the report as a whole. A reader who only looks at recommendations misses important information.

## 2. PROFILE OF CUMBERLAND HILL SCHOOL AND ANNEX

The John J. McLaughlin Cumberland Hill School, located in Cumberland, Rhode Island, serves students in kindergarten through fifth grade. The school is comprised of two buildings; the original opened in 1954 and serves grades two through five. A multi-classroom wing was added to this building in 1968, and a further three-room extension was added in 1997. Kindergarten and grade one are housed in a leased facility. Referred to as “the Annex,” it is located a short distance away, adjacent to and owned by a Catholic Church.

The school administration includes one full-time principal and one part-time assistant principal, who also serves as the district literacy coordinator. There are five classroom teachers in each of the grades from one through five, two full-time kindergarten teachers, and one part-time kindergarten teacher. The staff also includes four self-contained/inclusion special educators, two resource teachers, two reading specialists, one full- and one part-time speech and language pathologist, as well as one part-time art teacher, one part-time music teacher, a media specialist, two physical education teachers, two nurse-teachers, and one guidance counselor. There is a full-time secretary in each building, as well as a part-time lunch monitor/office assistant. Nine teacher assistants work in a combination of self-contained special education and inclusion classrooms. An individual assistant, one full-time kindergarten assistant, one part-time kindergarten assistant, and two day shift and two night shift custodians complete the staff.

Of the 649 students attending Cumberland Hill School and Annex, 95% are white, 2% are Asian, 2% are Hispanic, and 1% is black. Eighty-six students (13%) receive special education services, and 99 students (15%) receive reading support. Forty-one (6%) are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.

The Cumberland Hill School community participates in a variety of school programs and initiatives, including service learning projects, the Feinstein Good Deeds Program, the Lego League’s Robotics Challenge Tournament, and Drama Club performances. Further, faculty initiatives have also resulted in the establishment of “Math Night” for faculty, staff, students, and families, where students challenge their parents and siblings to a variety of activities provided, showcasing their mathematical skills in the process.

### **3. PORTRAIT OF CUMBERLAND HILL SCHOOL AND ANNEX AT THE TIME OF THE VISIT**

Cumberland Hill School and Annex is a school that is physically divided. Nestled on a wooded piece of land and set back from a well-traveled road, the main building houses grades two through five. Due to overcrowding, the school leases an annex from a Catholic church to accommodate its kindergarten and first grade. To access the annex, one must walk up a slight hill to an intersection and cross a busy road.

Both school buildings are in poor physical condition, outdated, and overcrowded. Broken window shades and heating problems make classrooms uncomfortable. Students eat in the gymnasium, separated from physical education classes and equipment only by a flimsy blue curtain. There are no art or music rooms. There is little recess equipment, and recess often takes place on the pavement and in the parking lots.

The homogenous student population fills the classrooms with polite, respectful learners. Students comply with teacher requests and understand the importance of learning. They have the basic skills they need to succeed, but they require more opportunities to fine tune their thinking and go beyond the basics.

Teachers meet before and after school in a commendable attempt to establish a consistent approach to teaching and to equalize their expectations among grade levels, but much work still needs to be done. The school has simultaneously undertaken new and ambitious changes in instruction, and teachers struggle to utilize them effectively in their daily instruction. The hardworking staff feels the need for more professional development in the areas of math, reading, and writing.

The principal has injected new life into Cumberland Hill School and Annex. Faculty feel supported by him and are thankful for his guidance and leadership skills in making academic changes. Parents say he makes himself available to them, fitting meetings into his busy schedule made more complicated by his frequent jogs between buildings.



## 4. FINDINGS ON STUDENT LEARNING

### Conclusions

Students at Cumberland Hill School and Annex love reading and say they need more books in their classrooms and the school library. Generally, they are effective readers. Students enthusiastically read during the daily Self Selected Reading time. They know how to choose books at the appropriate reading level by using the five-finger rule, and they use titles and book summaries to select books that are of interest to them. In upper grades, students read books connected to their science and social studies units. Students at every grade level attentively listen to and discuss classroom read alouds. They use the strategies of good readers well, without prompting. Students knowledgeably identify the sequence of main events, question while they read, and make predictions. They relate the books they read to their own experiences. Student discussions, questions, and responses about their reading, however, do not extend beyond the literal level. In literature circles, for example, students ask mainly factual questions whose answers can be found directly in the text. They rarely make inferences about their reading. This is consistent with the New Standards Reference Examination Results in Analysis and Interpretation. *(following students, observing classes, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, meeting with students and school administration, talking with students and teachers, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, classroom assessments, discussing student work with teachers)*

Students write across all curriculum areas, but the quality of their writing is not consistent. Their expository writing is stronger than their creative writing. Students' creative writing remains similar from grade two to grade five in that they use little variation in sentence structure, lack descriptive language, and employ limited organization. Most students mechanically use a web to organize their ideas, write drafts, and edit them to make a final copy. In a few classrooms, students show they understand the elements of quality writing; their writing is organized and well developed. It contains supporting details and the appropriate use of conventions. They know how to improve their drafts by revising, to critique their writing for conventions and supporting detail, and to discuss the elements of quality writing by sharing their work with others. Too many students, however, often do not understand the purpose or importance of writing for an audience. Further, they generally are able to make only the corrections that the teacher points out; they do not write often enough, and they write in too few genres. Most importantly, these students say they are good writers, yet they do not understand the qualities of good writing. *(following students, observing classes, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, talking with students, teachers, meeting with the school improvement team, discussing student work with teachers, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, School Improvement Team Self Study for SALT 2004)*

Many students struggle to apply mathematical concepts in new situations and to justify their solutions to problems logically, thoroughly, and clearly. When students work with partners or in cooperative groups, they successfully use problem-solving skills throughout the school day. When working alone, however, they do not often meet with the same success. While most students report their work is too easy, many do not understand the purpose of, or mathematical concepts behind, the activities or games they play. Struggling math students often become lost and simply copy answers from the other students in their group, failing to learn the intended skills and concepts. Students in some classes orally share their solutions using mathematical vocabulary, offer multiple strategies to solve problems, and build on the solutions of others. In far too many classes, however, students are satisfied with one solution and do not try to explore other possibilities. *(following students, observing classes, talking with students and teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries)*

Students are well behaved and come to school ready to learn. They accept the differences of others and share their ideas. Students know their daily routines, allowing for more productive educational time. They enjoy helping one another and patiently wait for personal attention. Students respect themselves, their fellow students, and the adults in their learning community. They are compliant and readily do what is asked of them. As a result, they are confident in their ability to learn and comfortably complete their daily tasks. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with students and parents, talking with students and teachers, reviewing district and school policies and practices, 2003 SALT Survey report)*

### **Important Thematic Findings in Student Learning**

Students:

- ◆ Work well together and respect others
- ◆ Perform better when they understand what is expected of them
- ◆ Are satisfied with simple solutions and rarely extend their own learning
- ◆ Show inconsistent success
- ◆ Often do not understand the purpose of their work

## 5. FINDINGS ON TEACHING FOR LEARNING

### Conclusions

Teachers teach reading in a variety of ways, including read alouds, self selected reading, literature circles, and guided reading. While reading personally appropriate texts, struggling readers receive support from teaching assistants, resource teachers, reading specialists, and parent volunteers. Hence, they are developing the skills to strengthen their reading abilities. Professional development records indicate a high percentage of staff attends reading workshops, but they do not coordinate reading instruction among their classrooms. Students lose valuable instructional time for developing their critical thinking skills as they relearn procedures and processes. Teachers regularly monitor student progress using running records and Developmental Reading Assessments, but some are unsure how to use these results to improve student learning. Reading instruction focuses mainly on basic comprehension and does not push students to develop thoughtful interpretation of text. *(following students, observing classes, talking with students and teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, reviewing records of professional development activities)*

A common approach to writing instruction is missing at Cumberland Hill School and Annex. The limited instruction of writing lacks focus and consistency. The School Improvement Team recognizes there is no consistency in writing instruction. Teachers rarely show students examples of high quality writing or point out strong writing techniques in the books students read. Assignments rarely help students understand the elements of quality writing. Instead, they write simply to complete an exercise, concentrating on the number of sentences they write and the mechanics and neatness of what they write. Rubrics used to assess the writing reflect the students' concentration on these areas. Teacher feedback to students about their writing offers positive reinforcement but does not push students to extend their writing abilities. Few teachers challenge students in their writing, hindering their growth as writers. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with school improvement team, reviewing records of professional development activities, talking with students and teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, School Improvement Team Self-Study for SALT 2004)*

Teachers are working hard to learn to use the new Math Investigations program. Although many have attended the available professional development, they say they recognize that they need and want additional training in this area. Aside from cooperative grouping, most struggling students receive little personal support. Teachers have difficulty meeting the needs of all learners. Pockets of excellent math instruction exist, where students solve problems in a variety of ways and justify their solutions orally and in writing. In these classes, teachers challenge students to understand the underlying concepts behind their classroom activities. Elsewhere, teachers do not connect the underlying math idea to instructional activities and games. As a result, students struggle to apply these concepts independently and to explain their mathematical reasoning logically. *(following students, observing classes, talking with students and teachers, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing records of professional development activities, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, reviewing classroom assessments)*

Teachers at Cumberland Hill School and Annex show dedication to their school and their students. They arrive early and stay late. Many perform uncompensated bus duties to ensure the safety of their students. Teachers give freely of their own time before and after school for meetings and extracurricular programs such as drama club and robotics. They spend their own money on supplies and professional development opportunities not provided by the school. Teacher experts work towards helping others understand and implement new educational practices. The dedication of all staff members enhances the school's learning community and helps the school run smoothly. *(meeting with the school improvement team, parents, school and district administrators, talking with teachers, parents, staff, and school administrator, observing the school outside of the classroom, reviewing records of professional development activities, 2003 SALT Survey report, School Improvement Team Self-Study for SALT 2004)*

**Commendations for Cumberland Hill School and Annex**

Dedicated, hardworking professionals

Willingness to try new instructional practices

**Recommendations for Cumberland Hill School and Annex**

Develop consistent and coordinated instructional practices and expectations at and across all grade levels in reading, writing, and math.

Raise the level of expectations for all students.

Refine your rubrics, or develop criteria charts that reflect specific elements of quality writing.

Model quality writing and problem solving strategies for students.

Continue to share teacher expertise to increase the quality of instruction in writing and math. Pursue additional common professional development opportunities in writing and math.

Integrate reading with writing instruction. Connect reading to writing by emphasizing quality elements of writing in reading selections.

**Recommendations for Cumberland School District**

Provide common professional development opportunities for all teachers in literacy, writing, and math.

Provide opportunities for consistent communication and collaboration between and within grade levels.

Provide curriculum support for teachers in the area of writing.

## 6. FINDINGS ON SCHOOL SUPPORT FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING

### Conclusions

Communication at Cumberland Hill School and Annex is not adequate. The teachers in “the Annex and the Big Building” isolate themselves from one another and see themselves as two distinct faculties, hindering the coordination and continuity of student learning. Teachers lack adequate time to communicate with their colleagues during the school day, resulting in drastically inconsistent instruction, repetitive content, and varying degrees of homework. Parents also voice concerns about inconsistent school-to-home communication. While some teachers send weekly classroom newsletters or create personalized student reports, others rely mainly on report cards to communicate with families. Consequently, some parents perceive an inequity of quality instruction and strongly advocate for specific classroom placements, skewing classroom composition. Many parents request more information about what their children are learning and how they can help them at home, specifically in the area of Math Investigations. *(meeting with parents, school and district administrators, talking with students, teachers, and parents, 2003 SALT Survey report, observing classes, following students, observing the school outside of the classroom, School Improvement Team Self-Study for SALT 2004, reviewing school improvement plan)*

Special education at Cumberland Hill School and Annex focuses on meeting the needs of individual students and is moving towards a more inclusive environment. The positive, receptive attitudes of teachers, students, and staff increase the success of the programs. General and special educators, as well as teaching assistants, attend common professional development opportunities. The school community employs a combination of resource, pull out, and self-contained approaches. The strong collaboration of teachers and their effective communication with families on student progress enhance student learning. Cumberland Hill School and Annex helps special education students reach their full potential. *(observing classes, following students, talking with students, staff, teachers, and school administrator, meeting with the school improvement team, students, parents, school and district administrators, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, reviewing records of professional development activities, 2003 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, 2004 Rhode Island Alternate Assessment, reviewing classroom assessments)*

Facilities are a serious problem. The use of technology is almost nonexistent because of old and broken equipment. Space is inadequate to meet the learning needs of students. There is no space for confidential meetings. “Art on a cart,” “music on a wagon,” and lunch in the gymnasium during physical education classes limit instructional time. Library facilities are old, outdated, and need reconfiguration. Students say they want and need new, interesting books in their library to encourage their love of reading. Students waste valuable instructional time waiting in line to use the few available bathrooms. The uneven heating of the main building, drafty windows and doors, and rooms in need of fresh paint all contribute to an atmosphere that is not inviting to learning. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, students, parents, school and district administrators, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administration, School Improvement Team Self-Study for SALT 2004, reviewing district and school policies and practices, Educational Facilities Study and Long Range Facilities Plan)*

The School Improvement Team is a strong guiding force in the school. The members oversee professional development and monitor the Action Plan implementation of the School Improvement Plan. Representation includes all areas of the school community, including the student body. By actively seeking teacher input, the School Improvement Team ensures the plan is a united force for change. This brings the school together to address student learning needs. *(meeting with the school improvement team, school and district administrators, talking with teachers and school administrator, reviewing school improvement plan)*

The dedicated principal of Cumberland Hill School and Annex puts the needs of students first. The principal admits it is a challenge to manage two buildings with limited administrative assistance. Regardless, his high energy level and deep knowledge of instruction continues to spark meaningful change. He is highly visible, visiting all classrooms in both buildings each day. The principal leads by example, substituting in classrooms, reading aloud to students, and furthering his own professional knowledge. District administrators say his administrative style is a refreshing change that draws from his strengths as a classroom teacher. His budgeting skills bring new needed materials, such as leveled texts and cafeteria tables, to the school. Staff and some parents say he goes out of his way to meet with them and uses a “ground up approach” to promote change. He openly acknowledges the need to further develop his communication skills with parents. *(following students, meeting with the school improvement team, students, parents, school and district administrators, observing classes, talking with students, parents, teachers, staff, and school administrator, 2003 SALT Survey report, reviewing records of professional development activities, letter from parent to SALT team, Teaching Portfolio of Gregory Zenion)*

**Commendations for Cumberland Hill School and Annex**

Effective, inclusive special education practices

Strong school improvement team

Positive school leadership focused on student learning

**Recommendations for Cumberland Hill School and Annex**

Improve and increase communication between buildings, among and between grade level teachers, and between parents and school.

Make facility upgrades: update computers, add new books and materials to the library, provide additional building space.

Provide additional parent education on curriculum and learning expectations.

Implement standardized homework policy.

Increase the amount of common planning time for teachers.

Continue to monitor and adjust Action Plans to meet student needs.

**Recommendations for Cumberland School District**

Redesign report cards to align them with classroom assessments.

Add administrative support.

Invest in facility upgrades: update computers, add new books and materials to the library, provide additional building space.

## **7. FINAL ADVICE TO CUMBERLAND HILL SCHOOL AND ANNEX**

Cumberland Hill School and Annex has dedicated staff, parents, and administration. We applaud the willingness of the staff to adopt and implement new curriculum and instructional practices. Continued teacher collaboration and communication are essential to student success.

Thoroughly train and support all staff in the new initiatives. Consistency in instructional methods and assessments within grade levels will help build a strong continuum of learning throughout the grades. Show students what quality work looks like and provide them with clear expectations. Focus on increasing the lines of communication among administrators, faculty, staff, and parents to facilitate this process.

You should be proud of the accomplishments and achievements you have made within a short period of time. These accomplishments can be improved only by adopting a greater sense of rigor and by raising your expectations for all students.



## ENDORSEMENT OF SALT VISIT TEAM REPORT

**John J. McLaughlin Cumberland Hill School and Annex**

November 19, 2004

Catalpa Ltd. monitors all SALT visits and examines each SALT visit team report to determine whether it should be endorsed as a legitimate SALT report. The endorsement decision is based on procedures and criteria specified in *Endorsing SALT Visit Team Reports*. (available on Catalpa website). Catalpa Ltd. bases its judgment about the legitimacy of a report on these three questions:

Did the SALT visit team and the host school conduct the visit in a manner that is reasonably consistent with the protocol for the visit?

Do the conclusions of the report meet the tests for conclusions specified in the visit protocol (important, accurate, set in present, shows the team's judgment)?

Does the report meet the tests for a report as specified in the visit protocol (fair, useful, and persuasive of productive action)?

Using the answers to these questions, the final decision to endorse the report answers the overall endorsement question: Is this a legitimate SALT team visit report? In order to make this determination, Catalpa weighs all the questions and issues that have been raised to decide whether a report is legitimate or not. While it is possible that a challenge related to one of the three questions listed above would be serious enough to withhold or condition the endorsement, it is more likely that issues serious enough to challenge a report's legitimacy will cut across the three questions.

While the SALT visit protocol requires that all SALT visits are conducted to an exceptionally high standard of rigor, visits are "real-life" events; it is impossible to control for all unexpected circumstances that might arise. The protocol for the conduct of the visit is spelled out in the *Handbook for SALT Visit Chairs*, 1<sup>st</sup> edition.

Since unexpected circumstances might result in either the team or the school straying too far from the protocol for a visit, Catalpa monitors both the school and the team during a visit regarding the conduct of the visit.

Most often actual visit events or issues do not challenge a report's legitimacy and Catalpa's monitoring and endorsement is routine. A district administrator, principal, faculty member or parent may not like a report, or think it is too negative, or think the visit should have been conducted in a manner that is not consistent with the protocol. None of these represent a challenge to a report's legitimacy; concerns that might challenge an endorsement are based on events that stray too far from the protocol.

The Catalpa review of this visit and this report was routine.

The steps Catalpa completed for this review were:

- discussion with the chair about any issues related to the visit before it began
- daily discussion of any issues with the visit chair during the visit
- observation of two portions of the visit
- discussion with the principal regarding any concerns about the visit at the time of the visit
- thorough review of the report in both its pre-release and final version form

The findings from the review are:

1. This team was certified to meet team membership requirements by RIDE staff.
2. This report was produced by a legitimate SALT Visit that was led by a trained SALT Visit Chair and conducted in a manner that is consistent with SALT Visit procedures.
3. The conclusions are legitimate SALT visit conclusions.
4. The report is a legitimate SALT visit report.

Accordingly, Catalpa Ltd. endorses this report.



**CATALPA LTD.**

Thomas A. Wilson, EdD

Catalpa Ltd.

December 13, 2004

## REPORT APPENDIX

### Sources of Evidence for This Report

In order to write this report the team examined test scores, student work, and other documents related to this school. The school improvement plan for John J. McLaughlin Cumberland Hill School and Annex was the touchstone document for the team. No matter how informative documents may be, however, there is no substitute for being at the school while it is in session—in the classrooms, in the lunchroom, and in the hallways. The team built its conclusions primarily from information about what the students, staff, and administrators think and do during their day. Thus, this visit allowed the team to build informed judgments about the teaching, learning, and support that actually takes place at John J. McLaughlin Cumberland Hill School and Annex.

The visit team collected its evidence from the following sources of evidence:

- Observing classrooms
- observing the school outside of the classroom
- following 10 students for a full day
- observing the work of teachers and staff for a full day
- meeting at scheduled times with the following groups:
  - *teachers*
  - *school improvement team*
  - *school and district administrators*
  - *students*
  - *parents*
- talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrators
- reviewing completed and ongoing student work
- interviewing teachers about the work of their students
- analyzing state assessment results as reported in *Information Works!*
- reviewing the following documents:
  - *district and school policies and practices*
  - *records of professional development activities*
  - *classroom assessments*
  - *school improvement plan for John J. McLaughlin Cumberland Hill School and Annex*
  - *School Improvement Team Self Study for SALT 2004*
  - *Educational Facilities Study and Long Range Facilities Plan*
  - *letter from parent to SALT team*
  - *district strategic plan*
  - *2003 SALT Survey report*
  - *classroom textbooks*
  - *2003 Information Works!*

- *2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries*
- *School and District Report Cards*
- *Cumberland School Department Mathematics Curriculum K-8 adapted: April 1999*
- *Elementary Language Arts Grades K-5 Cumberland School Department September 2000*
- *Budget Reports – Cumberland Hill School and Cumberland Hill Annex School*
- *Service Learning 2003-2004 Grade 4*
- *Investigations in Number, Data and Space Handbook*
- *Cumberland School Department presents Balanced Literacy Seminar Grades 3-8*
- *Technology Plans – Cumberland School Department February 2004*
- *Cumberland School Department – The Next Step in Balanced Literacy*
- *Teaching Portfolio of Gregory Zenion*
- *Folders:*
  - *Computer Inventory*
  - *New Technology Plan*
  - *Guided Reading*
  - *Self-Study*
  - *PLP Reading Instruction*
  - *Professional Partner*
  - *Spelling Project*
  - *PTO News*
  - *School Report Night*
  - *Cumberland Hill Handbook*

### **State Assessment Results for Cumberland Hill School and Annex**

Assessment results create pieces of evidence that the visit team uses as it conducts its inquiry. The team uses this evidence to shape its efforts to locate critical issues for the school. It also uses this evidence, along with other evidence, to draw conclusions about those issues.

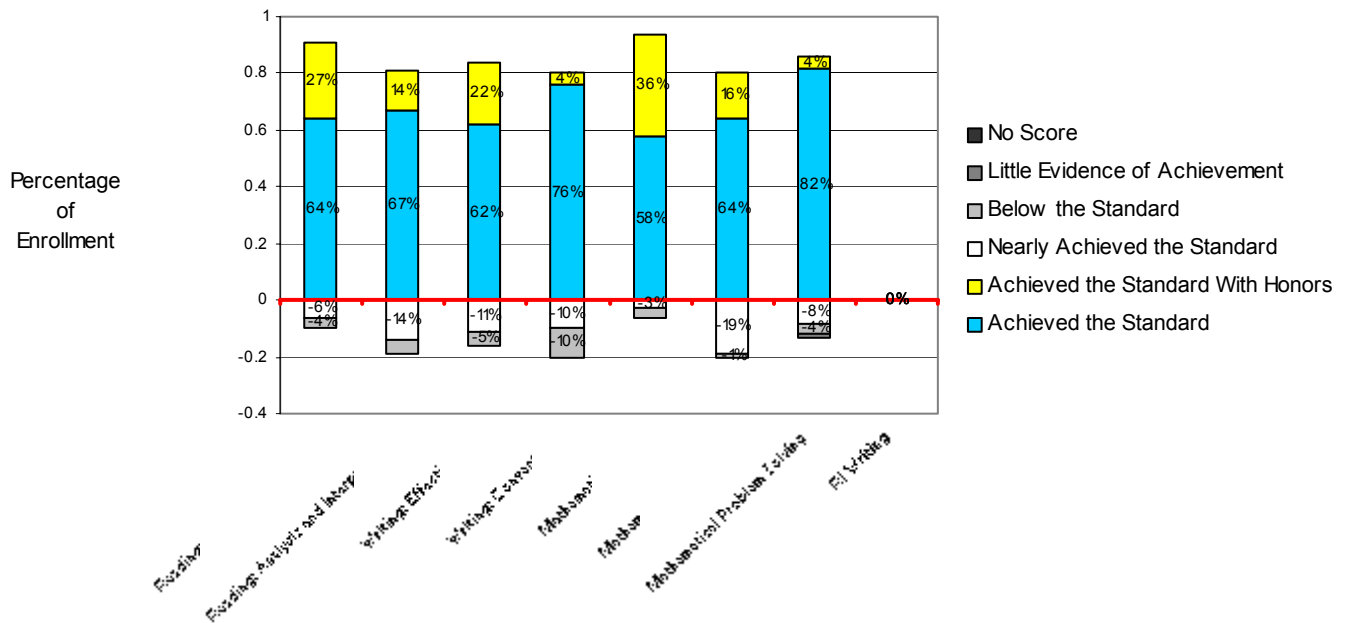
This school's results are from the latest available state assessment information. It is presented here in four different ways:

- against performance standards;
- compared to similar students in the state;
- across student groups within the school;
- and over time.

## RESULTS IN RELATION TO PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The first display shows how well the students do in relation to standards in English/Language Arts and mathematics. Student results are shown as the percentage of students taking the test whose score places them in the various categories at, above, or below the performance standard. Endorsed by the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education in 1998, the tested standards can be found in the publication *New Standards Performance Standards*.

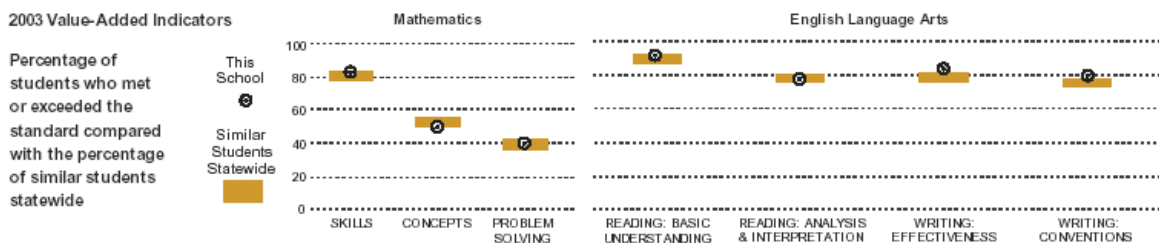
*Table1. 2003-04 Student Results on Rhode Island State Assessments*



## RESULTS COMPARED TO SIMILAR STUDENTS IN THE STATE

This chart includes the performance levels of students with special education needs, students participating in ESL or bilingual programs, low socio-economic status (a composite of income level, racial background and parental education), as well as the performance of students with none of these characteristics. Taking all these characteristics into account, the graph displays the overall performance of students in this school compared to - a group of students from across the state whose characteristics match this school's students.

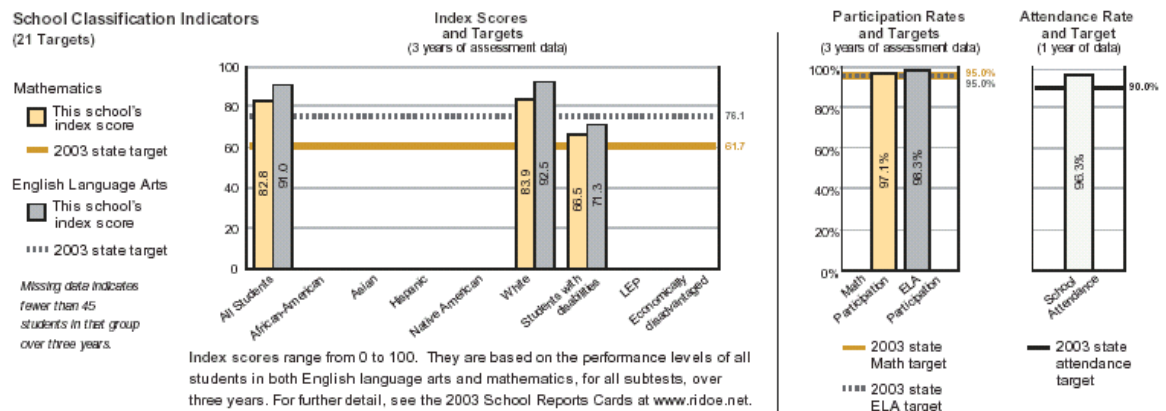
*Table 2. 2002-2003 Student Results in Comparison to Similar Students Statewide*



## RESULTS ACROSS STUDENT GROUPS WITHIN THE SCHOOL

An important way to display student results is across different groups of students with different characteristics who are in the school. This display creates information about how well the school meets the learning needs of its various students. Since breaking students into these smaller groups can result in groups becoming too small to show accurate results, this display shows the results based on three years of testing. The Department defines an important gap between different groups (an equity gap) to be a gap of 15% or more.

*Table 3. 2002-2003 Student Results across Subgroups*



**REPORT CARD FOR JOHN J. MCLAUGHLIN CUMBERLAND HILL SCHOOL  
AND ANNEX**

This Report Card show the performance of John J. McLaughlin Cumberland Hill School and Annex compared to the school's annual measurable objectives (AMO).

These report card scores describe John J. McLaughlin Cumberland Hill School and Annex as a school in need of improvement, making insufficient progress.

*Table 4. Report Card for John J. McLaughlin Cumberland Hill School and Annex*

Information Works! data for John J. McLaughlin Cumberland Hill School and Annex is available at <http://www.rido.net>.

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ICSE Representative, Co-Chair

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